

# The Messenger



April 2023

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Next Meeting  
In Person or by Zoom  
**SATURDAY,  
APRIL 1ST**  
**Room available 9:30AM**  
**Meeting starts 2:00PM**  
See Details Inside

## **Our Secretary Reports What You Missed at the February meeting:**

**Attendance:** 30 in attendance and 1 one Zoom.

**Treasurer:** Annual dues for 2023 are now due.

**Secretary:** American Society of Polar Philatelists will have their annual meeting at the St. Louis show and Cheryl Ganns will be signing her new book at St. Louis.

**Librarian:** Nothing to report.

**Historian:** Nothing new.

**First Vice-President's Report:** All the programs for 2023 have been arranged with a special program in November. Issues with reserving the rooms for the meetings were addressed. Meeting for next few months will be: April 1 all day and May 6 from 1-5 at the Resource Library; June 3, all day at the Monticello branch.

**Second Vice-President's Report:** Jeff reported that a YouTube/Social media commercial will be done in the next month or so.

**Newsletter:** Items for the newsletter are needed. Photos for directory were being taken.

**New Business:** A motion was made, seconded, and passed to donate \$50 to Harvesters in memory of Mickey Marks.

**Exhibits:** No report.

**Announcements:** Passing of Micky Marks, who will be missed by us all. St. Louis Stamp Expo and E & D Auction coming up at the end of the month.

**Show and Tell:** Rare cover from the 1939-41 US Antarctic Expedition; Tom Alexander Exhibit book; Japanese first flight cover from 1919; Counterfeit coil strips.

**Program:** How and why to collect Germany by Neil Becker. Thanks, Neil.

Respectively submitted by,

Michael Keil

**Meet in person or log into Zoom on  
Saturday, April 1st for  
"Zeppelin Fever: All You Ever wanted to Know  
About Zeppelins But Were Afraid to Ask."  
By Fred Reynolds**

## Meeting Location and Time:

We are back at the Central Library for this month but the day and time has changed.

**MPS Meeting Schedule for Saturday, April 1st**  
Meeting is to be held at Johnson County Central Resource Library  
9875 W. 87th St.  
Overland Park, KS 66212

9:30am—1pm Dealers and members, trade, sell & discuss.  
1pm— 2pm Auction Lots displayed and available to view, dealers time.  
2pm— 5pm Business meeting, show-n-tell and program with Auction to follow.  
We must be out by 5pm, so be ready to bid, pay with cash and pickup your auction lots.

### Philatelic Happenings:

**CERAPEX 2023**  
**APRIL 22-23**  
Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-4  
Machinists Union Hall-Local 831  
222 Prospect Place SW  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404  
*Only show in the region this month.*

### ABOUT ZOOM:

Please try to connect at 2:00pm on meeting days or shortly after. Once a show-n-tell or program is in progress, there is not a current way to notice that you are trying to log in.

This month's log-in to ZOOM.

Time: Apr 1, 2023 02:00 PM Central Time

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88206023687>



*Happy Easter*

Spring brings the Royals and the Easter bunnies back to the Country Club Plaza. These rabbits have been adorning corners around the Plaza since 1931 at Easter time.

Easter is a time for renewal. Think about renewing a forgotten part of your collection or sparking someone else's interest in stamp collecting.



Ukraine #923  
Easter

# In Memoriam

Michael "Mickey" Marks

1938–2023



Michael "Mickey" Myron Marks, 84, passed away peacefully with his family by his side on Saturday, February 25, 2023. Mickey was born on July 25, 1938 to the late Harold and Rose Marks, in Kansas City, MO. He graduated from Paseo High School in 1956 and went on to attend junior college, as well as served in the Army Reserves. He was married to the love of his life, Samyra (Glass) for 55 years.

He found work as a mail carrier for the United States Postal Service, which became a career that ended up lasting over 40 years, until his retirement. While he initially enjoyed the freedom of not working, he decided to go back to work, this time as a part-time pharmacy tech for CVS delivering medication, which he did for another decade.

He was a lifetime member of Beth Shalom Synagogue. He was an active member of B'nai B'rith, where he served as President and bowled in their Sunday morning bowling league for many years. Mickey served as the league's treasurer even beyond the time when he was able to play the game. Mickey was an avid, life-long stamp collector and amassed an impressive collection. He was a member of the Midwest Philatelic Society, The American Philatelic Society and The Society of Israel Philatelists, as he always had a special affinity for stamps of Israel. He was always grateful to find an opportunity to visit with fellow philatelists and provide help at local stamp auctions. He enjoyed finding the time to do some fishing and looked forward to every spring to begin a new backyard garden. Mickey liked to spend time with friends, whether it was participating in monthly poker games, playing Royal Rummy, attending ROMEO lunches and events or being involved in volunteer days at the soup kitchen.

A family man in the truest sense, he is survived by his wife, Samyra, his daughter and son-in-law Jennifer and Kevin Fine, of Wildwood, Missouri and son, Aaron, of Overland Park. He was the loving "Zayzay" of Ethan, Demi and Rylie Fine, all of Wildwood, Missouri. He is also survived by his older brother, Leonard Marks, of Tempe, Arizona. He leaves behind nephews and nieces, many dear cousins and wonderful friends.

Funeral services took place at Louis Memorial Chapel on Tuesday, February 28th. Burial at Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

The family suggests contributions to Harvesters or Wayside Waifs or to the charity of one's choice.

Mickey was so loved and will be deeply missed. But never forgotten.

*Obituary from Louis Memorial Chapel's website.*

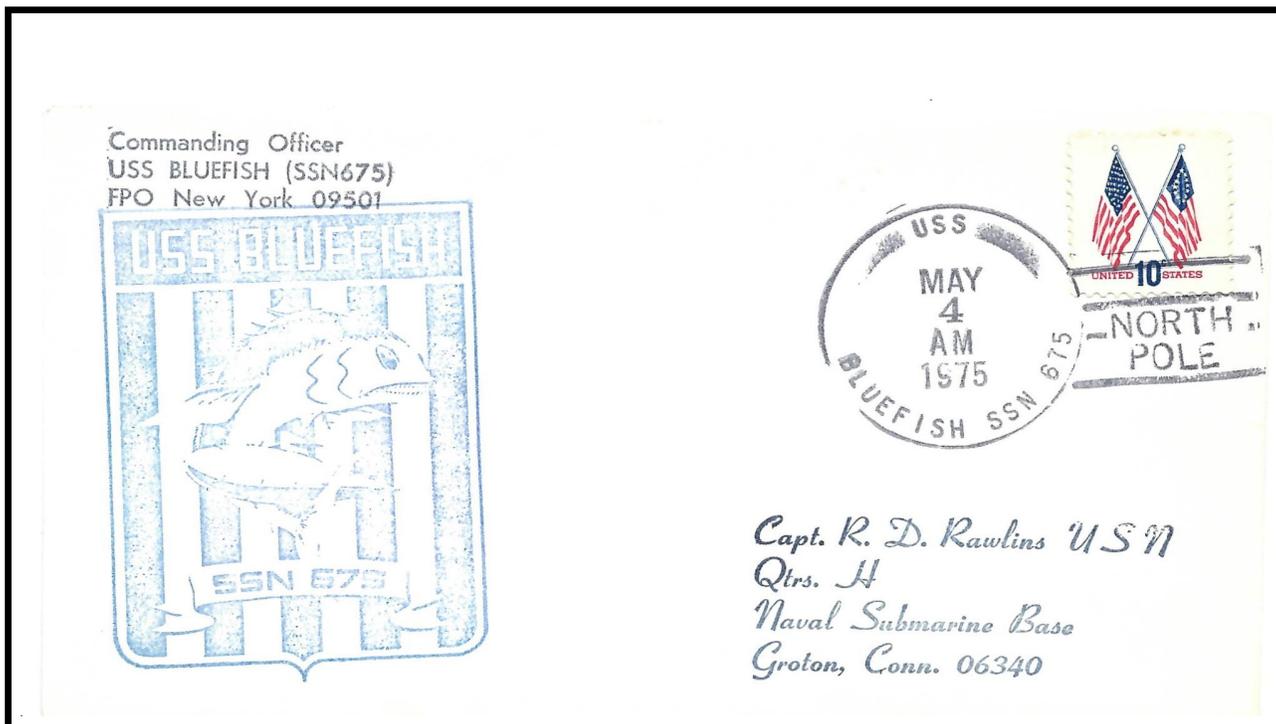
**Under the North Pole: More Submarines Under the Ice by Michael Keil**

The *USS Whale* (SSN-638) was a Sturgeon-class nuclear-powered attack submarine of the United States Navy. On April 6, 1969 *Whale* surfaced through the ice at the North Pole in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of Rear-Admiral Robert E. Peary's reaching the Pole.



Cover from Chief Petty Officer Ted Archambault MMC (SS), crew member on the *Whale* at the time of the North Pole surfacing. April 6, 1969. Scarce Locy type 2(n) cancellation, used only one day for the North Pole visit.

*USS Bluefish* (SSN-675), a Sturgeon-class attack submarine, surfaced at the North Pole on May 4, 1975.



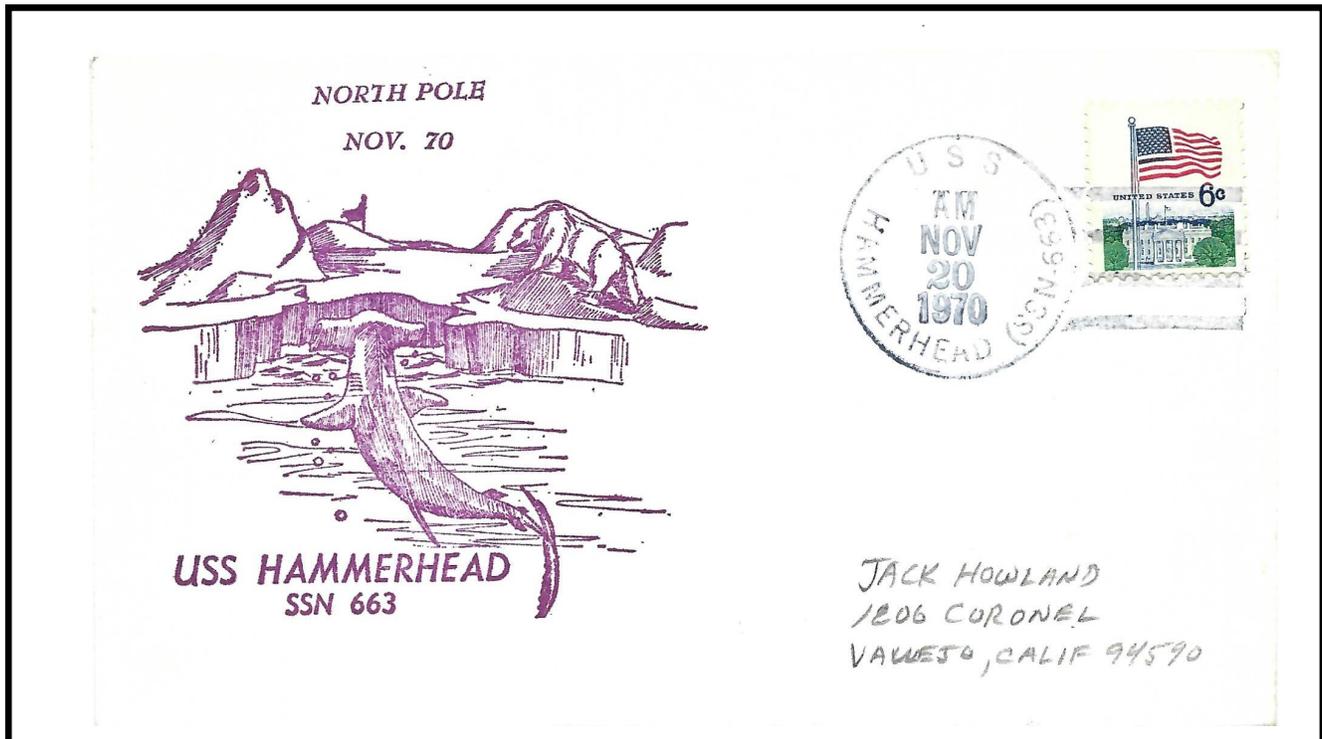
*Bluefish* had no post office, but use of this cancellation for the North Pole trip was approved by Navy Department officials.

Scarce Locy type F cancel.



*Bluefish* at the North Pole on May 4, 1975.

USS *Hammerhead* (SSN-663) November 20, 1970. The Locy type 2 (n+) cancellation was used only on North Pole covers. Scarce cancellation.



Another Sturgeon-class submarine, the USS *Hammerhead* (SSN-663). *Hammerhead* set a record for surfacing through the ice, which included surfacing at the North Pole on November 20, 1970. (Courtesy Steve Shay, USCS website)

All covers from my collections. Information on cancellations from the Catalog of United States Naval Cancellations, Universal Ship Cancellation Society, David A. Kent, editor-in-chief.

## DEAD COUNTRIES: (Stamp-issuing countries that no longer exist) by Neil Becker

### #7 Republic of Ima'nid'yat

The Republic of Ima'nid'yat, along with the smaller Ima'foo'liny Island was a little-known volcanic island nation just south of the Equator in the Pacific Ocean. It was first populated in the mid-eighteenth century by hungry Hawai'ian explorers who, upon seeing the smoke from the volcano in the center of the main island, thought there was a luau going on and rushed in, heedless of the reefs that surrounded both islands. The shipwrecked survivors settled on the island, hoping for rescue. Future approaches were from European and American vessels, who were hoping to find a barbeque and their ships met the same fate as the Hawai'ians. (One of the early ships fortunately contained a group of female missionaries, thus ensuring the stabilization of the population over the years.

Finally, in 1882, one enterprising American devised a huge sign and erected it facing the ocean stating "No Barbeque Here!" Thus, no further ships were wrecked but communication with the outside world was established. Most of the islanders wanted to write their relatives, announcing they were alive, but since no trees grew on the islands, they had no paper. Instead, they mined thin volcanic rock and wrote in ink from octopuses brought up from the reefs. The elected postmaster devised a stamp, with the design etched on the flat end of a short steel bar. He embossed the address side of the letter-rocks by striking the bar with a hammer on the rock. \*



Image of Stamp Impression

The letters were placed in tin cans that had been sent to shore by the ship's captain, who, fortunately had just come from Tonga. Unfortunately, the rocks were too heavy for most of the tin cans and they sank to the ocean floor. Only a few survived to be received by relatives, (most of whom used the letters as doorstops after they were read.)

In 1898 an American warship, returning from the Philippines, blasted a large hole in the reef with its big guns, large enough for ships to approach the islands and rescue all 412 residents. Thus the Islands were abandoned and the Republic of Ima'nid'yat ceased to exist.

\*(note) Since this stamp was not printed on paper, Scott Catalog does not recognize it as a valid philatelic item.



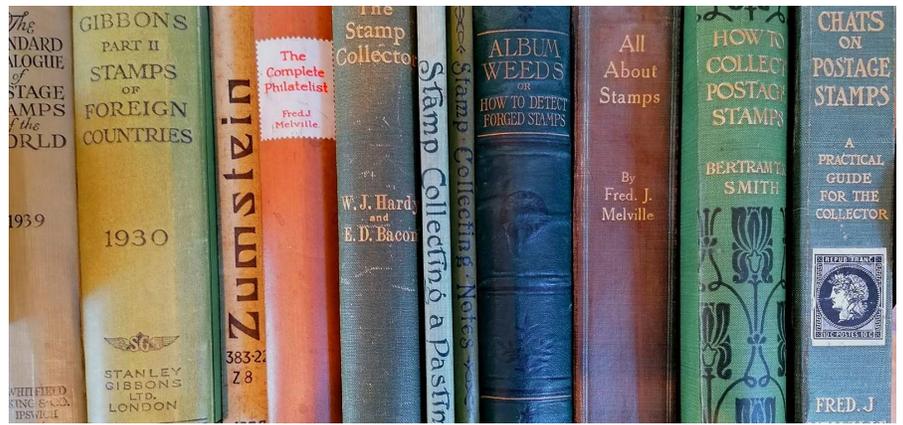
Stamps of Israel and Palestine



The Midwest Philatelic Society Website, Marketplace & Blog is  
[www.midwestphilatelicsociety.com](http://www.midwestphilatelicsociety.com)

Find previous newsletters, links to other stamp info and more on our website.

**The Library Corner:**  
**Reviews of Books Found in the**  
**MPS Library that you can**  
**check out. Check with Librarian**  
**Neil Becker at a meeting or**  
**nbecker44@gmail.com**



**Review by Jeff Jaxx**

**The Stamp Atlas**  
**W. Raife Wellsted, Stuart Rossiter & John Flower**  
**Facts on File Publication**  
**336 Pages**

This book gives a continent-by-continent, country-by-country breakdown of the geographic and philatelic history of the globe. The book is broken down by continent. For each continent the authors thoroughly discuss each modern country. Each country is first split into time periods designed to show the ebb and flow for Empires and occupying powers. After 1840, information on stamp routes, earliest issues, and prominent stamp producers is included. Every country has at least 3 maps depicting borders, large cities, major postal routes.

It was written by philatelic historians. The information is very broad and gives a good first line of reference for research. From this information, it would be easy to refine any search. The maps are easy to read and colorful. If thinking about starting a collection in a new country, it would be helpful to skim that country's philatelic history to get an overall feel for the material.

### **Philatelic Ramblings:**

Losing another good friend in our philatelic world. Mickey Marks was our longest, continuous member. I believe Mickey joined MPS when he was quite young, as a junior member. He made me feel welcome from the first time I sat near him during a meeting. We would discuss the auction lots that Jim Allen had in the upcoming auctions at E and D. He would pester me about my "lists" when we were at the stamp shows Scott use to have at the Ramada Inn in Overland Park. He would say, "You are so organized!" Which I would respond, "I have to be, otherwise I'm buying something I already have." To which he would say, "That's why I need to sell some stuff." And I would imagine that is very true. Mickey collected all his life. Unlike so many of us that collected as a kid and then put it to the side while we built a career, families, etc. His interest in U.S., Palestine and Israel kept him engaged in the hobby all his life. I will miss getting in trouble with him during the club auctions, he always had a comment or two about what was in the auction. And you know Scott's rule, "IF your talking, your bidding." I will miss talking with his wife, Samyra at the library or at a show. She would often come and be reading a magazine in the lobby while Mickey was checking out the dealers. I would say to him, "I see your wife came with you today and he would just give me a look and then say, Yes we are going to dinner with some friends after this." He would complain if that months speaker went too long with their program. The worst was when past member Tom Poulson would give his travel log programs of Poland. The first time I experienced that I asked Mickey, "Does Tom collect anything?" To which Mickey replied, "Yes, he collects Poland and more." "So why doesn't he show or relate the stamps to his slides of Poland?" Mickey just looked at me and said, "Good question, he never does!" Yes, Mickey Marks will be missed.

I wish I could have shared this with Mickey. He was a postal carrier for most of his working career and I am sure he would have had a dry witticism about what I recently came across. *In Fairfax County, Virginia, election officials were concerned about the lack of returned ballots from college students. So, they*

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*Continued from pg. 7*

*asked a focus group to find out why college students weren't sending their mail-in ballots back. The group found that the students were not able to figure out where to get a stamp.*

***Business Insider** said that these "young voters" didn't know where stamps came from. Considering that millennials grew up in the digital age, that makes sense. Sending an email or text is easier than mailing a letter, and buying things like stamps has fallen to the wayside in the face of that convenience. As a result, stamps, even online ones, have seen their prices drop.*

I am not sure about that last sentence as to what the author means. Because the price to mail keeps going up but maybe they are talking about the stamps online that are at a discount because they are counterfeit. But this is a concern. If young people don't know how to buy a stamp then why in the world do we think they will ever be collectors of these little pieces of paper. The older I get the more amazed I am about the lack of knowledge or curiosity that young people have. They certainly have never learned how to research anything. Perhaps having the whole world's knowledge at your finger tips has caused them not to learn how to research. Think of how we had to research anything by going to the library, finding the books or newspapers. Reading! Studying! Those skills I learned long ago have helped me with this hobby. There is a guy on Virtual Stamp Blog that is constantly posting some stamp and asking what country is this from or what is the Scott# or both. There are some others that usually respond to him ever so politely with the answer. I have been tempted to say to him, "Go to the library or buy a set of Scott's catalogues and look it up yourself." Then I think I sound like my Grandfather telling my brother or me to look it up in the dictionary when we asked how to spell something. To this day I am glad he did that. Because of him I know how to research anything.

*JMc*

## ***One Man's Feud with the American Banknote Company by Jeff Jaxx***

When the United States was founded, individual states and private institutions were responsible for producing currency, securities, and bonds. Due to the increasing need for these products, a number of engraving and printing firms were established in the financial hubs of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. Following the financial Panic of 1857, seven of the larger security printers merged to form the American Banknote Company.

Fearing that the American Banknote Company would totally dominate the market, the majority of the remaining companies eventually merged into either the National Banknote Company or the Continental Banknote Company. For the next 17 years, these three institutions would compete for the United States postal contract.

Charles F Steel was born in 1832 and grew up in Philadelphia. At the age of 16 he became apprenticed with Danforth, Perkins & Co. There he was taught the art of engraving. He joined the firm after his apprenticeship. By 1856, Steel was the main engraver for the company. In 1857, Danforth, Perkins & Co was approached to become a charter member of the American Banknote Company. During the merger, a dispute over the employment terms forced the six Danforth employees to leave.



Charles Steel was one of these employees. Joining forces with local bankers, the employees founded the National Banknote Company to compete against the American Banknote Company. Within one year, the National Banknote Company had secured a number of contracts and was financially stable. When the National Banknote Company secured the United States postal contract in 1861, Charles Steel was placed in charge of all stamp production.

National would hold the postal contract for the next 11 years with Steel supervising all production. It was Steel who invented and patented the grill system employed to deter the reuse of stamps. All United States postal stamps issued in 1867 and 1868 were issued with a form of Steel's grill.

US #79  
Geo. Washington  
National Banknote  
Co with grill

Due to the American Banknote Company's increasing market share and the bad blood between the two firms, the National Banknote Company decided to merge with the Continental Banknote Company at the conclusion of the postal contract in 1873. Using the National Banknote contacts, the Continental Banknote Company was awarded the 1873 contract. Charles Steel was once again placed in charge of stamp production.



US #190  
Alexander Hamilton  
American Bank  
Note Co

By 1879, the American Banknote Company was dominating the market. Although Continental held the lucrative postal contract, it was apparent that the company could not survive. When the Continental Banknote Company was absorbed by the American Banknote Company, terms included the release of the six original Danforth employees including Charles Steel.

An embittered Steel returned to Philadelphia and started a small printing company. In 1889, Steel decided to bid against the American Banknote Company for the postal contract. Submitting a significantly low bid, Steel was awarded the contract. American, having a history with Steel and not wishing to lose the contract, immediately protested Steel's bid. American claimed that Steel did not possess the needed facilities, presses, and experience to fulfill the contract.

Steel responded by citing his long stamp production experience and his ability to lease the needed resources. Postmaster General A. D. Hazen sided with Steel but did require him to submit proof of facilities and equipment within one month. Despite Steel's assurances, he was unable to lease the needed facility. The American Banknote Company would eventually be awarded the 1889 contract.



US #J29  
Postage Due  
Bureau of Printing  
And Engraving

Amazingly, the situation was repeated in the 1893 contract. Steel once again submitted a very low bid. When the sealed bids were opened, American once again protested Steel's bid. This time, Charles Steel employed a team of lawyers to defend his bid. Over the next two weeks, lawyers for both Steel and American argued their cases before Postmaster General Wilson Bissel.

Bissel, exhausted by the legal quagmire, approached the Secretary of the Treasury about the possibility of stamp production. After discussing postal stamp production with the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, the Treasury Department submitted a bid with the Postal Department. This bid was only slightly higher than Steel's bid. Postmaster General Bissel immediately accepted this bid and the Bureau of Printing and Engraving until recently, has been producing postal stamps ever since.



Overrun Countries series issued 1943  
Scott #909-920

The American Banknote Company still exists and is a major producer of securities, bonds, traveler's checks, and foreign currency. American has only printed one series of United States stamps, the Overrun Countries, since losing the postal contract.

Charles Steel remained in Philadelphia. He used his wealth to become the largest produce wholesaler in Philadelphia. He died in 1904. Steel is considered by many to be the most influential person on United States stamp production of the 19th Century.

**New Issues for 2023:**

**Tulip Blossoms**

Forever rate  
 Ten designs, Booklet of 20  
 Coil rolls of 3,000 & 10,000  
 Issue Date April 5th  
 Print Quantity-500,000,000 Booklet  
 12,000,000 for 3,000 coil and 30,000,000 for 10,000 coil.



**U.S. Flag**

Forever rate  
 One Design, Pane of 20, Booklet of 20,  
 Coil rolls of 100, 3,000 & 10,000  
 Issue Date April 10th  
 Print Quantity –100,000,000 for pane (BCA)  
 900,000,000 for booklet (APU)  
 1,350,000,000 for 100 coil roll (APU)  
 15,000,000 for 3,000 coil roll (BCA)  
 125,000,000 for 10,000 coil roll (BCA)  
*A total of 2,490,000,000 stamps for this one issue, two different printers and five different formats!*



The print quantities were not available at press time last month for the following:  
  
**Art of the Skateboard**  
 Print Quantity–  
 18,000,000



**Roy Lichtenstein**

Forever rate  
 Five designs, Pane of 20  
 Issue Date April 24th  
 Print Quantity-18,000,000



**New Israel issue for 2023. Preorder available on Hipstamp.**

Hope you enjoyed this month's newsletter. Thanks to Jeff J., Mike K. & Neil B. for their contributions. You can contribute too by emailing me for next month's issue. **Deadline for the May issue will be April 15th.** Happy stamping! *Jim Mc*